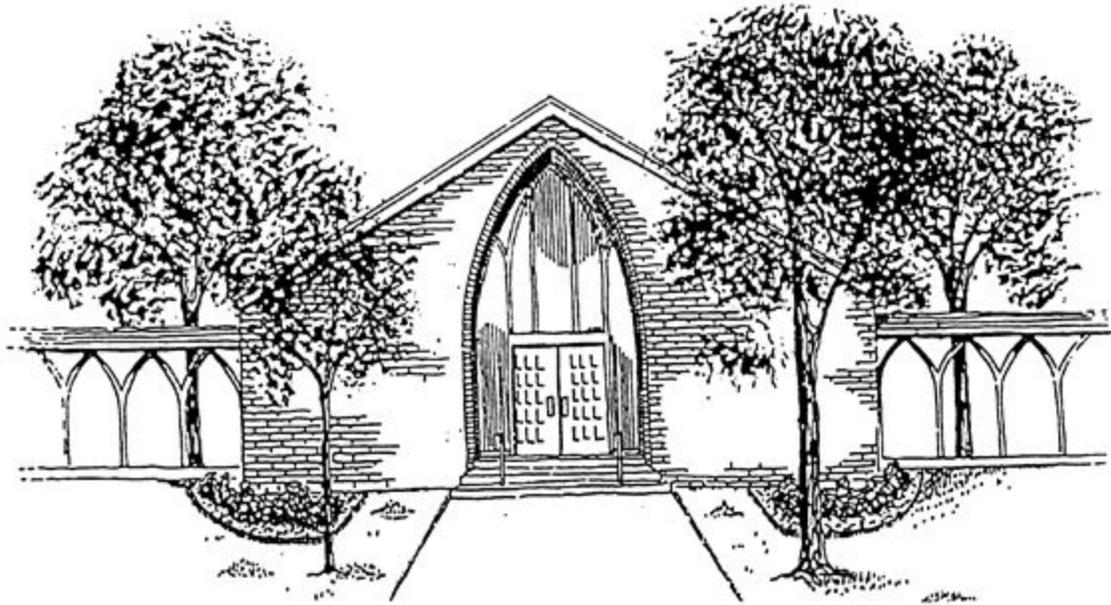


St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church
The Fourth Sunday of Advent



Sunday, December 20, 2020
10:30 A.M. Rite II

Thank YOU for worshipping with us today.
We welcome the participation of children in our worship.
Please sign our guest registry.

Child Care area is in the back of the Nave

The Right Reverend Larry Benfield, Bishop of Arkansas

The Reverend Michael Briggs, Rector

Susan Mason, Organist

Becky Ibison, Office Administrator

Church Office: (479) 783-2101

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Facebook: St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church and Facebook Live

Twitter: St. Bart's Church@stbartschurch1

Prelude “Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming” Setting by Gilbert Martin

Opening Hymn **Blest be the King Whose Coming**
(stand as you are able):

Advent Candle Lighting

Leader: Purify our conscience, Almighty God,
by your daily visitation;

That your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

All candles except the white candle are lit.

Proclaiming the Word of God

Priest: Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People: **And blessed be his kingdom, now and forever. Amen.**

Prayer for Purity:

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Great Commandment:

Jesus said, “The first commandment is this: hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is the only Lord. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these.” Mark 12:29-31

“Glory to God”

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,

we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God,

you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us;

you are seated at the right hand of the Father; receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,

you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,

in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

The First Reading:

(please sit)

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

When the king was settled in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the Lord is with you." But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the Lord: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the Lord of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Let Us Pray in Unison

Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26

- 1 Your love, O Lord, for ever will I sing; *
from age to age my mouth will proclaim your faithfulness.**
- 2 For I am persuaded that your love is established for ever; *
you have set your faithfulness firmly in the heavens.**
- 3 "I have made a covenant with my chosen one; *
I have sworn an oath to David my servant:**
- 4 'I will establish your line for ever, *
and preserve your throne for all generations.'"**

- 19 You spoke once in a vision and said to your faithful people: ***
"I have set the crown upon a warrior
and have exalted one chosen out of the people.
- 20 I have found David my servant; ***
with my holy oil have I anointed him.
- 21 My hand will hold him fast ***
and my arm will make him strong.
- 22 No enemy shall deceive him, ***
nor any wicked man bring him down.
- 23 I will crush his foes before him ***
and strike down those who hate him.
- 24 My faithfulness and love shall be with him, ***
and he shall be victorious through my Name.
- 25 I shall make his dominion extend ***
from the Great Sea to the River.
- 26 He will say to me, 'You are my Father, ***
my God, and the rock of my salvation.'

The Second Reading:

Romans 16:25-27

Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith-- to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Gospel:

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Luke 1:57-80

The Birth of John the Baptist

Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her.

On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him Zechariah after his father. But his mother said, “No; he is to be called John.” They said to her, “None of your relatives has this name.” Then they began motioning to his father to find out what name he wanted to give him. He asked for a writing tablet and wrote, “His name is John.” And all of them were amazed. Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue freed, and he began to speak, praising God. Fear came over all their neighbors, and all these things were talked about throughout the entire hill country of Judea. All who heard them pondered them and said, “What then will this child become?” For, indeed, the hand of the Lord was with him.

Zechariah’s Prophecy

Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke this prophecy:

“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them. He has raised up a mighty savior for us in the house of his servant David, as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us. Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors, and has remembered his holy covenant, the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham, to grant us that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all our days. And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins. By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

The child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day he appeared publicly to Israel.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Homily: Fr. Michael Briggs (followed by a time of silent reflection)

The Nicene Creed:

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Prayers of the People: (please kneel, sit or stand)

Extend your greeting to your favored ones, O God, and let your Holy Spirit overshadow us, that we may proclaim your love to our generation, as we await the coming of Christ, saying: Let your faithfulness and love be with us; for your love is established for ever.

Make of your Church, O Holy One, a house that shall be made sure forever before you, that we, like Mary, may respond in faithfulness and be bearers of the Christ Child to all the world. Let your faithfulness and love be with us;

for your love is established for ever.

Raise up just leaders, Almighty One, and guide the nations of the world, that all people may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and that evildoers shall afflict them no more. Let your faithfulness and love be with us;

for your love is established for ever.

Compassionate One, let the prophetic writings be made known to all the nations to bring release and comfort to all who are oppressed, to lift up the lowly and fill the hungry with good things. Let your faithfulness and love be with us;

for your love is established for ever.

Loving God, empower your Holy Spirit to come upon this community that we may be the servants of the Lord and live graciously according to your word. Let your faithfulness and love be with us;

for your love is established for ever.

Gracious One, visit all for whom we pray with your mysterious love, and honor the intercessions of your people as we pray for Tim, John, Tommy, Ben, Debbie, Eleanor, Jeannie, Jennifer, Ben, and Cathy.

Hear our glad tidings as we offer you our praise and thanksgiving, especially for _____.

Raise up into your glorious eternal presence those who have died, especially all who have died from COVID-19.

Let your faithfulness and love be with us;

for your love is established for ever.

For those who do not yet believe, and for those who have lost their faith, that they may receive the light of the Gospel. Let your faithfulness and love be with us;

for your love is established for ever.

O God, our heavenly Father, whose glory fills the whole creation, and whose presence we find wherever we go: Preserve those who travel, especially Mark, Bill, Donna, Fred, Becky, Stevi, Joseph, Fr. Michael and all those traveling over this Christmas and New Year Holiday, surround them with your loving care; protect them from every danger; and bring them in safety to their journey's end. Let your faithfulness and love be with us;

for your love is established for ever.

Priest: Holy One, cast out all fear by your Word of perfect love, the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed, that we may joyfully bring about the obedience of faith to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever. **Amen.**

Concluding Collect (together)

Lord, you have called us to serve you. Grant that we may walk in your presence: your love in our hearts, your truth in our minds, your strength in our wills; until, at the end of our journey, we know the joy of our homecoming and the welcome of your embrace, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Those things, good Lord, that your servants have prayed for, give us grace to work for; and in the purpose of your love answer our prayers and fulfil our hopes for Jesus' sake. **Amen.**

The Confession:

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor. [silence]

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

Blessing for Birthdays: Barton Hindley (December 24)

O God, our times are in your hand: Look with favor, we pray, on your servants ___, as they begin another year. Grant that they may grow in wisdom and grace, and strengthen their trust in your goodness all the days of their lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Peace

The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

Announcements

Celebrating the Holy Communion

Meditation

Eucharistic Prayer C:

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and Praise.

God of all power, Ruler of the Universe, you are worthy of glory and praise.

Glory to you for ever and ever.

At your command all things came to be: the vast expanse of interstellar space, galaxies, suns, the planets in their courses, and this fragile earth, our island home.

By your will they were created and have their being.

From the primal elements you brought forth the human race, and blessed us with memory, reason, and skill. You made us the rulers of creation. But we turned against you, and betrayed your trust; and we turned against one another.

Have mercy, Lord, for we are sinners in your sight.

Again and again, you called us to return. Through prophets and sages you revealed your righteous Law. And in the fullness of time you sent your only Son, born of a woman, to fulfill your Law, to open for us the way of freedom and peace.

By his blood, he reconciled us.

By his wounds, we are healed.

And therefore we praise you, joining with the heavenly chorus, with prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and with all those in every generation who have looked to you in hope, to proclaim with them your glory, in their unending hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

And so, Father, we who have been redeemed by him, and made a new people by water and the Spirit, now bring before you these gifts. Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ our Lord.

On the night he was betrayed he took bread, said the blessing, broke the bread, and gave it to his friends, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper, he took the cup of wine, gave thanks, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Remembering now his work of redemption, and offering to you this sacrifice of thanksgiving,

**We celebrate his death and resurrection,
as we await the day of his coming.**

Lord God of our Fathers and Mother: God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Sarah, Leah and Rachel; God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: Open our eyes to see your hand at work in the world about us. Deliver us from the presumption of coming to this Table for solace only, and not for strength; for pardon only, and not for renewal. Let the grace of this Holy Communion make us one body, one spirit in Christ, that we may worthily serve the world in his name.

Risen Lord, be known to us in the breaking of the Bread.

Accept these prayers and praises, Father, through Jesus Christ our great High Priest, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, your Church gives honor, glory, and worship, from generation to generation. **AMEN.**

The Lord's Prayer:

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say:

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive
those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Breaking of the Bread:

Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
Therefore let us keep the feast.

**Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: grant us peace.**

Your place was set at this table before the world began!

We welcome YOU to Christ's table.

Gluten Free wafers are available by request.

Post-Communion Prayer: (please kneel, stand or sit as you feel called)

**Father of all, we give you thanks and praise, that when we were still far off
you met us in your Son and brought us home. Dying and living, he declared
your love, gave us grace and opened the gate of glory. May we who share
Christ's body live his risen life; we who drink his cup bring life to others; we
whom the Spirit lights give light to the world. Keep us firm in the hope you
have set before us, so we and all your children shall be free, and the whole
earth live to praise your name. Amen.**

The Blessing:

Closing Hymn:

**O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
(Verses 1, 2, 5, 6, 7 and 8)**

Dismissal:

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude “Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus” Setting by K. Smith

The Flowers on the Altar are given to the Glory of God**Announcements:**

- If you would like to give Poinsettias in honor of/or memory of someone for Christmas, please provide the names, make your check payable to St. Bartholomew's and note on the memo line that it is for Poinsettias for Christmas. **DEADLINE TO SUBMIT NAMES IS DECEMBER 20.**
- We are putting together bags to provide Christmas Dinner to families in need like we did at Thanksgiving. We are asking you to donate green beans, cranberry sauce, stove top stuffing, instant potatoes, turkey or chicken gravy packets and some sort of frozen rolls.
- We have two (2) spaces left for the 5:30 p.m. Christmas Eve service. You **MUST** sign up for this service, which will be spoken and will not have any music. There will be a pre-recorded Service, which will be played at 11 p.m. on Christmas Eve and will remain on our Facebook and YouTube sites. This pre-recorded Service will be very special, so please watch it and tell your friends, even if you attend one of the other services.
- To get notified of new videos and when we go live, subscribe to our YouTube Channel:
<https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCNGrepZQ-z3qw9Ha-eMrlMg>. If you have any questions, talk to Fr. Michael or Will Leeper.
- If you want to attend one of our services in person, please let Becky know by either calling the office or sending an email by no later than Thursday of each week.
- If you would normally give through the plate, please consider mailing your offerings in or going to Tithe.ly on our webpage, i.e., stbartsfs.org to give.
- **Vestry Members:** Donna Goldstein-Senior Warden; Steven Hill-Junior Warden; Caroline Cross-Secretary; Chris Allen; Cindy Cunningham; Michael Morton; Silvia Balsara; Jo Carson; Rebecca Ward.
- Becky will be on vacation December 28 through January 1. During that time, if you need anything, please call Fr. Michael's cell 901.461.8380.

- **Remember to keep the Prayers of the People updated.** These are the people presently on our prayer list: Children and staff at the El Hogar Orphanage in Guatemala; Jeannie (McCabe); Ervin (Selbach); Julie (Speer); Chase (Negley); Liam (Joy); Earl (Terry); Peter and Suzanne (Jones); Linda (Lambertson); Jim and Barbara (Lambertson); Mike; Marie; Hazel, Jim; Dickie (Foster); Doug (Neely); Myra (Dyer); Sylvia (Burks); Claire (Person); Amber (Johnson); Morgan; Kay (Lyon); Halox (Hern); Jim (Cearley); Martha (Boyd); Teresa (Zolnik); Tim (Hess); Elvin (Frick); Sherry (Coleman); Katia (Higgins); William (Woodward); Denna (Bond); Susan (Martin); Fred (Peters); John (McFee); Doug (Carson); Chelsea; Neill (Noel); Tommy (Kremer), Ben (Daly); Debbie (Kern); Eleanor (Vernon); Ben and Jennifer (Ballinger); Sandy (Kutait); the Kutait Family; Cathy (Lyons); all teachers, students and parents; all sick with COVID-19 and their families; all First Responders, Healthcare Workers and those serving the public.
- Fr. Michael's cell number is 901.461.8380. Please call him anytime between 8:00 am to 8:00 pm, or the office at 479.783.2101 from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm. If it's an emergency, please do not hesitate to call anytime.

The Week of December 20 through December 27

Sunday, December 20

8:00 A.M. Holy Eucharist - Bella

10:30 A.M. Holy Eucharist - Lucy

Tuesday, December 22

5:30 P.M. Inner Christianity Group

Wednesday, December 23

10:30 A.M. Sack Lunch

Thursday, December 24 - Christmas Eve - Office Closed

4:00 P.M. Holy Eucharist - Lucy and Scott

5:30 P.M. Holy Eucharist - Bella

11:00 P.M. On-line Virtual Service - Scott

Friday, December 25 - Christmas Day - Office Closed

Saturday, December 26

5:00 P.M. Holy Eucharist - Silvia and Patsy

Sunday, December 27

8:00 A.M. Holy Eucharist - John and Jo C

10:30 A.M. Holy Eucharist - Fred